OFF the Record

EXCERPTS OF SPEECH BY

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Ladies and gentlemen,

It has now been about nine months since I was sworn in as Director of Central Intelligence. This afternoon I would like to discuss with you some of the things we are doing in intelligence, particularly at CIA; some of the changes that have taken place at the direction of the President which I believe have strengthened our intelligence community; and, finally, some of the concerns that are still with us.

Intelligence as we know it today goes far beyond some of the traditional concepts and impressions of intelligence -- historically, of course, mostly associated with military affairs. What we are concerned with today are all aspects of the capabilities, intentions, and activities of foreign powers and organizations -- and the impacts of political, economic, sociological, technological, and other trends and developments. To provide the kinds of accurate evaluations and estimates we need, information is gathered from a wide variety of sources -- some perfectly open, others quite confidential. This information is collated by intelligence analysts, a corps of scholarly experts, and evaluated by the National Intelligence Officers who are responsible for the best intelligence estimates we can possibly make, based on all the information we have gathered and the analyses we have completed. The guidance and direction for the intelligence community comes from the National Security Council -- composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense. The NSC conducts regular reviews of

intelligence policies to make certain we are properly supporting foreign policy objectives. The President and the NSC need the most accurate and informed judgments possible -- an essential ingredient for decision-making in the fields of national defense and foreign policy.

An Executive Order issued by the President in February made several organizational changes that I think have already proved significant and will do much to provide cohesiveness in our foreign intelligence effort. Especially meaningful for the effective collection and production of intelligence is the Committee on Foreign Intelligence -- the CFI -- established to strengthen the supervision of the Director of Central Intelligence over the intelligence community -- the intelligence components of the various national security agencies. This Committee, which I chair, establishes policy priorities for the collection and production of national intelligence as well as the budget preparation and resource allocations for foreign intelligence.

Also established was the Operations Advisory Group. This Group provides for the President recommendations on any special activities by the intelligence community in support of foreign policy objectives and reviews sensitive intelligence operations. This includes so-called "covert action" -- although in fact we are spending a very small portion of our budget today in this area, in the neighborhood of 2%.

An Intelligence Oversight Board was also established which has members from outside the government -- three prominent citizens. This Oversight Board considers reports from the Inspectors General and the General Counsels of the intelligence agencies on matters of legality or propriety and periodically reviews procedures in this area.

My own role in directing the intelligence community of the U.S. government was buttressed by the provision of two assistants: one, currently Admiral Dan Murphy, is Deputy to the Director of Central Intelligence for the Intelligence Community -- a new position. The second is the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence -- with an explicit mandate of responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the CIA. This position is currently held by Henry Knoche, a veteran intelligence officer with extensive experience on the analytical side of CIA.

At the same time, the President recognized that measures employed to acquire intelligence information should be responsive to legitimate needs only, and must be conducted in a manner that respects the established concepts of privacy and civil liberties.

Executive Order 11905 is a remarkable document, for all the modesty of its dry language of administrative instruction: In the most open society in the world it sets down rules -- openly and publicly -- by which the U.S. conducts a vital, difficult and necessarily partially secret function. These rules

document the expressed determination of Americans to permit no governmental function to extend beyond the limits of established national interest and to allow no interest to be higher than the rights of individuals assured to each of us by the Constitution.

I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that CIA is abiding by the directives of the President and by our own administrative regulations. We will not abuse our authority, and at the same time we will continue to produce the intelligence -- the analyses and estimates -- that our national leaders require.

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One of my continuing concerns is the lack of knowledge that exists about what CIA does and the kinds of things that CIA is giving attention to which are important to all of us in terms of national security.

There are, for example, our concerns about Soviet power. CIA has the responsibility for keeping the President, the National Security Council, and other elements of government advised on such matters as what the Soviets can do, what their military capabilities are, and what they intend to do. How far and how fast can their bombers go? What's their missile strength? Where do we stand on Soviet compliance with SALT -- that is, what are the Soviets actually doing in terms of the things that have been agreed upon? Much of this work falls to the CIA.

Then there is nuclear proliferation. You don't need to

have grandchildren to be concerned about what nuclear proliferation means to the coming generations. We must know where nuclear weapons might be produced and what nations are doing in this respect.

There is the matter of international terrorism -- a subject of growing concern to nations throughout the world. We must keep track of what terrorist groups overseas are up to in their planning, particularly as it might impact on American citizens and property. We work very closely on this by providing foreign intelligence to an inter-agency task force.

There is also world traffic in narcotics. We must try to identify major source countries for narcotics and the predominant routes for transporting narcotics. Although CIA is not in the law-enforcement business, we must collect foreign intelligence that impacts on how we combat the flow of narcotics to this country.

In recent years economic intelligence has become even more important -- joining political, military, scientific and sociological intelligence as areas where CIA must provide special attention. Suppose OPEC plans to raise its prices? What are the impacts on our allied countries, or on the lesser developed countries? These are questions CIA must try to answer.

What are the long-range political trends? While much of our work is devoted to analyzing spot developments -- producing current intelligence -- CIA also has an office that devotes itself exclusively to longer-term political trends in foreign countries.

No, it's not all clandestine collection of information -- although there are still traditional methods of collecting intelligence abroad from people whose sympathies are with us. Much of the work at CIA -- the so-called production of intelligence -- is a detailed collection and analysis of information from all sources -- including such open sources as the foreign press and radio.

I can assure you also that CIA is not just a paper mill. A constant effort is made to make certain that reports are responsive to the needs of the policymakers. And, to the extent possible, unclassified reports are made available to the public through the Library of Congress.

So I submit to you that intelligence production in the modern world is indeed essential, vital to national security. When some people claim we don't need a CIA, I consider this simply unconstructive cynicism. When people who would do away with CIA talk about freedom, democracy, open society, I say that we in intelligence are doing more to preserve the reality of these words than those who attack us.

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I can assure you we have an intelligence capability second to none in the world. We have an alert and warning system that should prevent any "Pearl Harbor" surprises. I think the great majority of the American people know and understand that. They want us to be competent -- to do our job, and do it well, within the constitutional restraints of the American system.

But I think they are sometimes confused by what they read in the press, and hear and see on television -- reports which do little to explain the true role of CIA in the government.

Sensationalism in some of the media -- masquerading as investigative journalism -- has served to distract the attention of the American people from what intelligence really is and really does -- which is to promote our national security. This kind of sensationalism ignores what has been done to provide both executive and congressional oversight on U.S. intelligence activities. And some of the allegations in the media seem to have simply come from whole cloth.

There are many examples: A magazine printed a story that CIA gave Tom Dewey a million dollars in 1948. This was totally erroneous; but it was printed again and again. An adventurer claims to have committed all sorts of excesses in the name of CIA. He denies this under oath, but the story reverberates in the press, radio, and television. The denials somehow don't get heard -- the allegations keep surfacing and are repeated over and over. And then all the misinformation is woven together in "conspiracy" theories and repeated again.

CIA has been made into an easy headline. Sensation-seeking journalists like to play on the minds of people, to promote the wildest fantasies of James Bond activity, all attributed to the CIA.

I certainly don't take issue with the need for strong oversight by Congress of intelligence activities. Nor do I take issue with responsible criticism in the media. But I certainly take issue with those who take an irresponsible

attitude and who, under the guise of news reporting, circulate misinformation which degrades the work of our loyal and dedicated intelligence officers and analysts. I believe the American public deserve more than this kind of superficial treatment.

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There is also the matter of secrecy with regard to CIA activities. It would seem self-evident to most people that secrecy is essential to an intelligence service. But unfortunately this remains one of our major concerns.

George Washington pointed out in a letter to one of his intelligence officers in 1777 that success in intelligence operations depends on secrecy, and for lack of it such operations are usually defeated. It's certainly as true today as then. By the same token, the leaking of a classified document can tell the adversary all he needs to know to tighten up his security and make our collection effort more difficult. ~~Not to mention the danger~~ Furthermore, such revelations present danger for foreign sources who cooperate with us, and to the effectiveness and lives of our own people overseas. Nothing can dry up our sources faster -- and cause consternation among our friends abroad, both individuals and governments faster -- than the leakage of secret information -- in the media, in books, or other ways.

We are proud of the fact that ours is an open society. Yet there are secrets in our society which we accept. The ballot box is secret; grand jury proceedings are secret; Congressional committees have executive sessions; our journalists keep

secret their sources of information; the lawyer, the physician and the priest have the right to draw the veil of secrecy over their dealings with individuals whom they counsel.

Thus, legitimate secrecy can and does play a positive role in protecting our freedoms. The right to personal privacy is the right to keep secret certain aspects of an individual life, at home and elsewhere. In its international dealings and in assuring its own security, our country too must have some privacy. In diplomacy confidentiality protects the integrity of negotiation between nations at peace and makes communication possible between adversaries, sometimes between belligerents. In the military sphere total openness would be tantamount to an absence of security -- even in the reality of every day life, leaving the store door unlocked and the till drawer open is not only foolish, it is wicked to lead a man into temptation. The need for secrecy in the collection of intelligence or in maintaining a capability for covert action partakes of both the nature of diplomacy and the requirements of military operations -- not surpisingly, because intelligence (the product) is the stuff that the policymaker and the diplomatic negotiator must have, and covert action capability provides the President with an option far short of military action when diplomacy has been rendered impossible.

In an open society individual privacy is protected by law and is ultimately governed by conscience -- in intelligence secrecy is defined by law and is limited by accountability.

Always, we -- in and out of government -- must bear in mind that the purpose of secrecy is not to keep knowledge from us, the people, but to protect our security by locking the door and closing the till drawer to any adversary who might otherwise be tempted. This is why I am against irresponsible or thoughtless secrecy, or, in bureaucratic jargon, "overclassification". "SECRET" stamps must never be used to obscure failures, disguise mistakes or cover up abuses. In the intelligence community we are continually in the process of assuring that only genuine intelligence secrets are protected. And that is why I am also concerned about senseless intelligence disclosures.

Leaks do enormous damage. Foreign governments wonder whether we will ever be able to hold on to intelligence secrets, and, therefore, are reluctant to share their own protected information which is often much needed to supplement our knowledge.

There must be a realistic appreciation by all Americans of the complex nature of secrecy in a free and open society, where in the absence of legal sanctions it is the responsibility of the individual -- whether government official, journalist or concerned citizen -- to balance carefully the legitimate demands of national defense with the exercise of first amendment rights.

For the past 30 years the Director of Central Intelligence has been charged under the law with protection of foreign intelligence sources and methods. So long as I am in this position I intend to do what this law requires.

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If we are to maintain secrecy in intelligence, we also recognize the need for accountability. Not only has the CIA issued directives internally to make certain there is no abuse of its authority, the CIA is making certain that the oversight bodies created in the executive branch and Congress have all the information and support they need to discharge their responsibilities. It is, of course, in the interest of the intelligence community as well as the Congress and the people to make certain that all intelligence activities are in compliance with the law and properly approved.

Since I became Director of Central Intelligence I have appeared some 40 times before the appropriate committees of Congress. I would like to see -- perhaps in the next Congress -- consolidated Congressional oversight. Instead of the seven committees to which I now report, I would hope to see a joint intelligence committee with representation from both House and Senate with full and exclusive oversight responsibility. In the meantime I will continue to cooperate fully with Congress, as I have been doing throughout these past nine months.

But accountability is a two-way street: as the oversight bodies assume a greater degree of authority over and responsibility for the proper conduct of intelligence functions, so they must assume a share of the responsibility for protection of these sources and methods. I will speak out against any unauthorized disclosures -- against any leaks that endanger the lives of people and abort programs that have been properly determined by lawful authority.

Finally, in terms of accountability, we of the intelligence community have an obligation to be as open as we can legitimately be with the American people, to explain publicly what intelligence is and what it is not, and to make clear the reasons we consider protection of intelligence sources and methods so important. By helping the American people to understand more about intelligence, we hope they will appreciate to an even greater extent its vital role in promoting national security, and in this sense assume a share of the responsibility for

effective foreign intelligence.

Thank you for your attention.